



Mental Wellbeing FAQ

What is wellbeing?

The term wellbeing describes the emotional, physical, and psychological factors that contribute to our mood and day to day functioning and can be both positive and negative. Numerous factors can affect our wellbeing such as diet, exercise, sleep, relationships and work, and everyone tends to change from day to day. While there are many areas of life that can enhance our wellbeing (e.g., learning a new skill, building positive relationships), equally, there are certain aspects of life that will challenge our wellbeing. Life isn't always easy, and we all suffer greater levels of stress and anxiety during key life events such as moving home, births, deaths, illness, marriage, and divorce.

This can also be the case during significant developments throughout a jockey's career: a long losing run, being injured, losing the ride on your best horse, parting ways with an owner or trainer, riding out your claim, negative press or social media comments or transitioning to your second career. These are all times when stress levels increase and when our behaviour can change. It is when these changes significantly affect day to day functioning (stop us doing things that we usually do), and how we feel, that things need to be addressed.

The picture below can help identify the emotions that you mostly feel on a day to day basis



What is depression?

Depression is the name given to a state of mind characterised by low mood, loss of interest and enjoyment, and reduced energy. The low mood varies little from day to day and is often **unresponsive to a change in circumstances**. Symptoms are graded by severity (i.e., mild, moderate, and severe), and symptoms are usually required to be present for a period of 2 weeks for diagnosis of a depressive episode.

What are the symptoms of depression?

As well as low mood, loss of interest and enjoyment, and reduced energy, symptoms of depression include:

- (a) Reduced concentration and attention.
- (b) Reduced self-esteem and self-confidence.
- (c) Ideas of guilt and unworthiness
- (d) Bleak and pessimistic views of the future
- (e) Ideas or acts of self-harm or suicide
- (f) Disturbed sleep
- (g) Diminished appetite.

Mild depressive episode

An individual experiencing a mild depressive episode is usually distressed by the symptoms and has some difficulty in continuing with ordinary work and social activities but will probably not cease to function completely.

Moderate depressive episode

An individual experiencing a moderately severe depressive episode will usually have considerable difficulty in continuing with social, work, or domestic activities.

Severe depressive episode

An individual with a severe depressive episode it is very unlikely to be able to continue with social, work, or domestic activities, except to a very limited extent.

What are the treatments for depression?

Treatments for depression mostly take the form of talking therapies to help you to see how your thoughts and feelings affect your behaviour (e.g., counselling), and/or treatment with medicine (e.g., anti-depressants). In some cases, a residential stay in a rehabilitation centre is required.

What is anxiety?

Generalised anxiety is one of the most common of the anxiety disorders characterised by continuous feelings of anxiety, nervousness, and trembling, **not in response to any particular event**. The individual must have primary symptoms of anxiety most days for at least several weeks at a time, and usually for several months to be diagnosed as clinically anxious.

What are the symptoms of anxiety?

Symptoms of anxiety include:

- a) Continuous feelings of anxiety and nervousness.
- b) Fears of becoming ill or having an accident.
- c) Trembling.
- d) Muscular tension.
- e) Sweating.
- f) Light-headedness.
- g) Restlessness, an inability to relax.
- h) An upset stomach.

What are the treatments for anxiety?

Treatments for anxiety include talking therapies, particularly Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), which helps re-structure your thoughts, and/or treatment with medicine (e.g., anti-anxiety medication). In some cases, a residential stay in a rehabilitation centre is required.

What is substance dependence (addiction)?

Substance dependence is when an individual gives priority to the use of a substance (e.g., alcohol, drugs, tobacco) over behaviours that were once of greater value (e.g., relationships, going to work).

What are the symptoms of substance dependence?

Symptoms of substance dependence include the following:

- (a) A strong desire or sense of compulsion to take the substance.
- (b) Difficulties in controlling substance-taking behaviour in terms of its onset, termination, or levels of use.
- (c) A physiological withdrawal state when substance use has stopped or been reduced or use of the same substance with the intention of relieving or avoiding withdrawal symptoms.
- (d) Evidence of tolerance, such that increased doses of the substance are required in order to achieve effects originally produced by lower doses
- (e) Progressive neglect of alternative pleasures or interests because of substance use, increased amount of time necessary to obtain or take the substance or to recover from its effects.
- (f) Persisting with substance use despite clear evidence of clearly harmful consequences, such as physical, psychological, and social distress.

What are the treatments for substance dependence?

Treatment for substance dependence can take the form of talking therapies (e.g., CBT) to help you to see how your thoughts and feelings affect your behaviour, treatment with medicine (i.e., a less harmful substance), detoxification, and self-help (e.g., Alcoholic Anonymous). In some cases, a residential stay in a rehabilitation centre is required.

What is the difference between a psychologist and a psychiatrist?

Psychologists are trained in 'talking therapy' which comes in a variety of forms such as traditional counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). Psychologists are not licensed to prescribe medication.

Psychiatrists are qualified doctors, who have then gone on to train in dealing with mental wellbeing. Similar to psychologists, psychiatrists can train in talking therapy, but they are also licensed to prescribe medication (e.g., anti-depressants). Medication can aid the individual in dealing with the symptoms associated with their wellbeing.